

Uma looks out for local kids with Room to Grow benefit

By **SEAN L. McCARTHY**

While Madonna and Angelina Jolie go to Africa to adopt needy children, Uma Thurman is improving the lives of poor kids much closer to home.

Thurman, the Boston-born star of "Kill Bill" and "Pulp Fiction," returned last night for a sold-out benefit

and auction at Westin Copley Place for Room to Grow, a nonprofit group that aids low-income mothers and their newborns.

Thurman, a mother of two, has served on Room to Grow's board since its inception in 1998.

"The connection was, the founder, Julie Burns (wife of filmmaker Ken Burns), was

living upstairs from me in my brownstone in New York," Thurman said.

The 36-year-old actress said she saw Burns collecting her first donations at the same time Thurman was buying clothes and supplies for her first child.

"To really feel the needs of a new mother, and the fears, the desires and hopes,

made it all the more important to me," she said.

Room to Grow (www.roomtogrow.org) provides education and support to poor mothers, serving about 200 families each year through its Boston office.

She wondered why adoption and foster care remain so difficult in America.

"Why is it so hard to get children? And then not enough energy is used to make sure they're safe," she said. "Our focus, I mean frankly, our real waste — our loss of social resource is that our war focus is so immense, we don't have enough resources to feed and clothe our own."

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